

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Hampton's new boat license fee FAQ

Hampton's 124 miles of waterfront provide unparalleled access to water recreation for residents and provide a unique draw for visitors. The cost of maintaining our waterways and providing public safety services for boaters continues to increase. In an effort to defray a portion of cost with a user fee, Hampton has implemented a boat license fee.

What boats are affected?

Privately owned boats and watercraft used for recreational purposes normally operated, docked, stored, or kept within city limits. (Non-motorized boats less than 20 feet in length are exempt, as are boats used for business.)

How do you define that?

It applies to where the boat is based for most of the year – whether that's on a trailer at home or at a marina slip in Hampton. It is not necessarily where the owner lives.

How much will it cost per year?

For motorized boats under 16 feet in length, \$20

For motorized boats 16 feet to less than 20 feet in length, \$40

For boats 20 feet to less than 40 feet in length, \$75

For boats 40 feet in length and over, \$150

Do I need to register my boat with the city?

The city has access to state boat registrations (Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and Coast Guard), trailer registrations and marina information, as well as records from when boat owners were charged personal property taxes. That information will be the basis for one-time registration forms that will be mailed during July. Boat owners will need to review and verify that information and return the form by Aug. 1, 2015. If you own a qualifying boat and do not receive a form, you should notify the commissioner of the revenue's office.

Do jet skis count?

Yes, they are motorized.

What if I have a kayak, canoe or small sailboat?

If it is less than 20 feet long and you never use a motor with it, you do not need to register or pay a fee. If you use an electric or gas motor, you need to register the watercraft and pay the fee.

When do I pay?

Bills for the 2016 calendar year will be mailed in the fall of 2015, along with personal property tax and vehicle license fees. They are due by Dec. 5, 2015. Bills can be paid by mail or online at

http://hampton.gov/assess_and_collect

What if I sell my boat?

Notify the Commissioner of the Revenue's office. You can get a refund only if you sell before Jan. 15, but you won't get a bill for the following year. It is your responsibility to notify, or you will continue to be billed for subsequent years. If you sell your boat and buy a new one, the boat license fee may be transferable.

What if I buy a boat?

If you buy between January and June 30, you should notify the commissioner of the revenue's office and pay the fee within 30 days. You will be billed for the full amount for 2016. If you buy a boat after July 1, you will receive a bill the following December for 2017.

What if I don't notify the city?

Boat records will be matched against a variety of sources – state records, trailer records and marina information. You will be billed when the office receives notification of the boat. If you rent a marina slip for the majority of the year, the city will assume your boat is based here. If you have a boat trailer registered in Hampton, the city will assume the boat is also in Hampton. In those cases, the burden will be on the owner to show that the boat is not based in Hampton.

What if I don't pay on time?

You will receive a delinquent notice and face additional administrative fees.

What if I don't pay at all?

It is unlawful for any person to operate, dock, store, or keep a boat within the city without having paid the license fee. The failure or refusal of an owner or operator of any boat subject to a license fee imposed constitutes a class four misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than \$250.

What if I still have questions?

Call the Commissioner of the Revenue's Personal Property Department at 757-727-6183.

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